who directed these operations of war. How came he, then, to be the malignant influence that was the chief agent in precipitating chaos? It is a unique story in the annals of squalid tragedy. Probably the whole truth has not yet been revealed.

Rasputin was a religious satyr of hypnotic powers. He established indirect dominion over a highly domesticated autocrat through the control he acquired over a perfectly virtuous consort by means *His influence* which are entirely creditable to her as an *°Czarina* affectionate mother. Rasputin repeatedly saved her son, the heir to the throne, from death by his remarkable mesmeric gifts. Thenceforward his sway over the Court was unchallengeable. His orgies of unbridled lust were disbelieved or ignored by his Imperial patrons. This evil monster could do no evil in their sight. The relations which won the sinister libertine power over this simple and pure-minded couple he preserved to the end of the great tragedy. A whisper from his libidinous lips into the ear of the infatuated Czarina, passed on to her fond but feeble husband, was enough to undermine confidence in the most loyal and serviceable officials, civil or military. Anyone who protested against the regime of ineptitude and turpitude that was driving Russia into the abyss was liable to be suspected and ultimately

removed on a word from Rasputin. His selections for removal or promotion were impelled not by questions of disservice or usefulness to the Empire, but of hostility or servility displayed towards himself. " Whom he would, he set up, and whom he would, he put down." Honest and capable but intractable Ministers he put down, and worthless Ministers were substituted. He must have been a man of exceptional